

Flinders awarded prestigious Fulbright Chair

Issued 2 December 2009

The Australian-American Fulbright Commission has awarded the prestigious Fulbright Distinguished Chair in American Political Science to Flinders University, following a national, competitive selection process. Flinders University will host the Chair for five years, from 2011.

Through the Chair, distinguished scholars from the United States will be based at Flinders, to undertake collaborative research into key political issues affecting both countries.

Flinders Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Barber, said the appointment has confirmed the University's standing as a leading centre for the teaching and researching of American Studies.

"Flinders University has a long and proud tradition in American Studies and we are delighted to be awarded this prestigious position, which will add an exciting new dimension to the University's teaching and research in the field," Professor Barber said.

Professor Barber said Flinders appreciated the support received from Premier Rann in its bid for the Fulbright Distinguished Chair and concurred in the Premier's view of the potential for further collaboration with American researchers on public policy that would raise South Australia's profile in the United States.

Professor Don DeBats, Head of the Department of American Studies at Flinders said that one of the key objectives of the Fulbright program is to encourage ongoing, collaborative research.

"The relationships formed between Flinders and the distinguished scholars from the US and their institutions could extend for decades to come," said Professor DeBats.

The five scholars to sequentially occupy the Chair are expected to bring their own research projects to Flinders, and Professor DeBats expects there will be interest across the university, from Humanities to Law, in engaging with them.

The Fulbright Commission will work with Flinders University on an associated program of visits and presentations around Australia for the Distinguished Chairs.

"The Fulbright Commission is delighted to partner with Flinders University because of its well-established programs and expertise in American studies. It has strong links with U.S. Scholars, leading U.S. institutions and the U.S. Congress through its very successful internship program for Australian students," Fulbright Commission Executive Director, Dr Joe Hlubucek, said.

The Australian-American Fulbright Commission is a non-profit organisation in Australia, established through a bi-national treaty between the Australian and United States governments in 1949. The Fulbright Program is one of the largest and most prestigious educational exchange programs in the world.

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